

REMARKS

In reply to the Final Office Action dated June 16, 2006, Applicants propose to amend independent claim 1 to clarify the claimed invention and add new claims 5-8 to protect additional aspects of the invention. In accordance with the accompanying Request for Continued Examination, Applicants respectfully request that this Amendment be entered into the record. Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-8 will be pending.

Applicants appreciate the courteous efforts of the Examiner and his Supervisor to expedite prosecution during the series of telephone interviews conducted between November 8th and 14th, 2006. During the interviews, the Examiner indicated that two different proposed amendments to independent claim 1 would distinguish the claimed invention over the prior art of record, and place the application in condition for allowance. Specifically, these proposed amendments include (1) the addition of certain "spring" and "rim portion" features and (2) the replacement of the phrase "provided at the central portion" with the phrase "provided through central portions." In light of this indication of allowability, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to include the "spring" and "rim portion" features agreed upon during the interviews. Applicants also have added a new independent claim 5 that includes the phrase "provided through central portions" that was agreed upon during the invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that this Amendment be entered by the Examiner, placing each of the pending claims 1-8 in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned Applicants' representatives at (202) 408-4000 if it would be helpful to further expedite the prosecution of this application and, thereby, minimize time and expense.

If any extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is required to obtain entry of this response, and not requested by attachment, such extension is hereby requested. If there are any fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or 1.17 that are not enclosed, including any fees required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, please charge those fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____


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